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VOTARIAL VERSE & ARABESQUES.

PHILIP ROBSON.

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VOTARIAL VERSE
&
ARABESQUES.

First published, 1921.

This First Edition is limited to 750 copies,
of which 700 are for sale.

Designed by Dante Gabriel Rossetti in 1862, and made by
Cozens, Matthews & Thorpe, London (No. 96674). Never before illustrated.
Subject:—"Time on the Wing." See Notes page 74.

VOTARIAL VERSE & ARABESQUES.

PHILIP ROBSON.

Palmer, Howe & Co.,
Manchester.
1921.

PR6035
O28V6

DEDICATION.

To G. D. R

"VOTARIAL VERSE,"
I dedicate to thee, my wife,
An evidence all delicate
Of our deep love which sweeteneth
And doth retain it's vernal breath
Throughout my life.

It's passion tense, it's listenings;
It's every best,
It's striving after deep-felt things
And that love incarnadine,
Lily-white and eburnine,
If well exprest,
Belong to you, O loveliest.

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EUCHARISTIC HYMN.

PANIS VITÆ.

NOW come we to Thine Altar-stair
And solace for our soul's desire,
In all humility and prayer,
Feed us, Holy Paraclete.

VITIS VERA.

May we be tendrils of the Vine,
Entwin'd and bound by love for Thee,
And ever-grateful, being Thine,
For Thy Cross at Calvary,
Feed us, Holy Paraclete.*

ST. PHILIP'S DAY—May 1st.

IN Goddès praise your pæans raise
Ye youths; with holiest vows
Bestrew sweet flow'rs, all blossoming,
And deck the threshold out with boughs.
Winter suspires—see Spring bearing
Her purpurean offering.*

ST. MICHAEL.

TO Thee, all hail! O winged Pursuivant,
O Warrior,—Primate—Taxiarch!
Whose sign expresses peace triumphant
To the heavenly puissant Hierarch.
Perchance yon Mount once shrin'd the pagan Bel
Before Christ's message reach'd this island shore,
Before th' angelic host crush'd that from hell,
And shining squadrons 'whelmed for evermore
The dragon and his fallen angel-host.
Rejoice, therefore, with those at Michael's Mount,
At Lowthian Inveresk, where evermost
Our Saint's rever'd and royally is paramount.
Let sacred Avilion's pæan of praise
Resound and swell most joyously alwaès.*

TWIN ALTAR LIGHTS.

SOME sixteenth century artificer
Rejoiced to make these vigorous work-of-art—
An Altar-Cross, perchance, a mystic censer—
A Chalice fair, calixiate, prepart
Of that set sacramental once helped to give
The highest service immemorially
Accredited by use imperative
And sanctioned primordially.
We see the Vine entwined—acanthus Greek—
Well reconciled with all urbanity,
Symbolic of the blend of thought antique
With spiritual Christianity.
The Vine, triumphant, holds the higher place
Whereas the "bear's foot" graces but the base.*

One of a pair; probably made in Nuremberg about 1650; Silver—weight 30 oz.; two marks, H.D. and V. or T.V. (Author's.) See Note page 73.

THE HOLY WISDOM.

(532–538 A.D.)

THE Architects were Anathemius
Of Trales, a Lydian, and a Grecian,
One Isodorus a Miletian.
They raised this Temple on the Bosphorus
Instimulated by Justinian,
A Roman Emperor and a Christian.
This heritage—most wonderful to us—
Is severed from her desponsation.
A strange God's worshipped under her vast domes—
Angelic forms lie hid. This violation
Dies when, propitiously, the Gnomes
Declare us worth its salvation.
" O Solomon, behold, thy palm I wrest,"
Let us then restitute, our creed confest.*

THE PORTRAIT.

MOST gracious woman whose frank face rever'd,
Enshrin'd and cherish'd as a memory,
I hold too sacrosanct and close-endeared
For all assailments. Let finest emery
With scarce perceptibility wear down
Resisting steel; let Time's attrition
Efface men's hard-wrot works-of-art and crown
Their labour with consignments to perdition;
Yet th' imperishable impress of the soul—
Marmoreally calm—intensified
By sternest sculpting to a final goal
Is ever mine—wisdom beatified.
And when both breath and earth are whelmèd o'er
No alchemist transmutes this *pensée d'or*.*

WINGED TIME.

THOU wilt outlive me as thou didst outlive
The architect belov'd to whom Rossetti
With lofty vision sure didst give—
But little recking all the debt he
Created by—this wond'rous gold invention,
With black inlays *en manière champlevé*,
Portraying all the Heav'nly constellation.
With Sol and Luna set in stars—*brevet*
D'invention. Precious are life's fleeting hours,
God's gift to use or waste ever striving
To follow that empyrean bird which dow'rs
The back. Elusive Time is on the wing!
May we of its creator's euphrasy
Draw tonic, then find added eucrasy.*

* See frontispiece and note p. 74.

THE MADONNA.

TO Desiderio this gem of cinque
Cento art's assigned. Rare bas-relief
Poetical and sweet. Could none but he
Endue with that immaculate belief
This terra-cotta giving us the grace
Of perfect Motherhood, all circumspect,
Devotional, as knowing well the place
Her Child's profundity of intellect
Would, in God's chosen hour, place Him without
Compeer amongst the sages of all time
Predestined Guide for devotees devout
To their true grail and guerdon all sublime?
O! Vestal Virgin spare us some largess
From thine inimitable tenderness.

Madonna and Child, in terra-cotta, dug up at Florence; attributed to Desiderio da Settignano; end of the 15th century. (Author's.)

TO A PUPIL.

I.

ARROGANCE.

REVISION this old sorry scheme of things
You would, your blithe self crown with roses,
Perchance quaff vinous draughts to give you wings
To redesign the old dome Heav'n discloses
O'er headstrong wanderers disconsolate
Who fail—as Omar did, by losing faith,
Receiving earthly dross commensurate
With his pursuit of that elusive wraith—
Him hurling from his high estate—
And on the morrow moan and cry aloud
To God, whose sanctuary they'd desecrate,
Despairing the dispersal of His cloud !
Beware the quest of doubtful arabesques
Lest it entice to ugly vorticesques.*

TO A PUPIL.

II.

BALANCE.

ENTRANCÈD Architect build well thy schemes,
Delight us with thy broad conception
Which flies the frail conceit and sure redeems
From indigence at its inception.
Thy planning musical, commodious,
Should hold to axiality yet not
Be equal quite—such art is odious—
The use of counterparts, ṣome aliquot
To equipoise and measure out surprises,
To make men think exact equality
Is nature's way, when, steadfast, she despises
Such bald insensate abject poverty.
No ! Fitly make Proportion feel her part
Of finest imagery, the highest Art.*

TO A PUPIL.

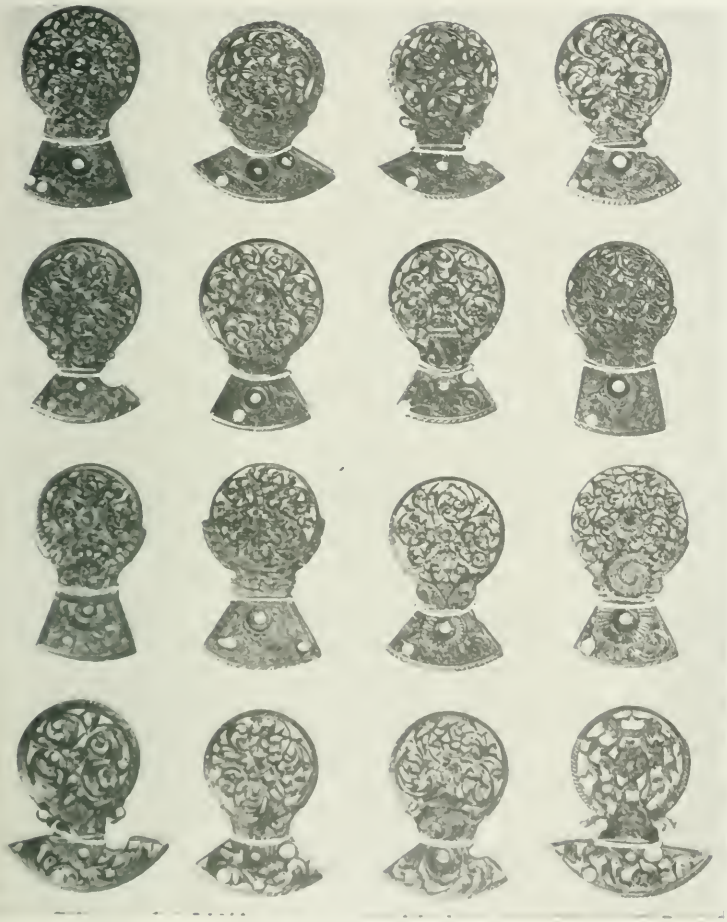
III.

TRUE ORIGINALITY.

A FAIR divinity you bow before—
Her name is Art—slaving to originate
Some superlative magnificence to adore,
Scarce dreaming that you can but imitate
Things older than the hills. You can but strive
To evolve from fresh assimilation
Of past masterpieces and thence derive
New stimulus for fine creation.
From mediocrity's stupidity
By steadfast loving toil you will be freed,
But fly the poison of cupidity
Then freedom's servitude will surely seed
In Truth—unsoilable—inviolate—
Immemorially commemorate.*

THE FILLING OF THE CIRCLE.

CONSUMMATE craftsmen unconcerned that Art
By many a seeker is hardly sought
Afar and near ; that many an upstart
Claims her palms but is ever vainly taught.
Your burins modestly you drove at Prescot—
Engraving, chasing all—with naïve delight—
Cut filigrees, fragile, in filemot—
Nor heeded that they're hidden from our sight.
No doubt those traceries enspherical
Are—son from father—fiduciary,
No hint discloses the empirical
Nor even hesitant chance quandary.
Yet artists great were they who first thought out
Those patterns close-confined yet paramount.



18th Century Watch-Cocks; made, probably, at Prescot, Lancs. (Author's.)

HER PORTRAIT.

COULD Lionardo see you he'd despair
Of capturing your enigmatic air,
Of portraiting your equiformal charm
And uniformest level-headedness—
Indicative of life's contentedness—
For deepest waters hold the stillest calm.
No, only English Watts with his unique
Soul-piercing gift, depicting but the best
With which each personality is blest,
Could bring success with art psychologique;
But esoteric power could not invest
His canvas with that essential intrigue
Of gladness, nor radiant sanctity
All-effluent in close proximity.

CHILDREN TO THE MOTHER.

NEEDS must love whom thou kissest morn and eve
Giving diurnal joy—nocturnal peace.
Instinctive loving teacher who dost weave
Joys irridescent ; as a morning breeze
Discovers azure limitless horiz'ns,
Your presence radiateth happiness ;
And day enthrall'd invincibly bediz'ns
Herself for multi-coloured merriness.
They love thee too, with fine and deep'ning love,
Thy children—tho', maybe, at times aloof—
But later Memory's self holds high above
Her mirror rich with undisguisèd proof.
The surest asset royal minds possess
Is wisdom, born of woman's tenderness.

LANCING COLLEGE.

ENVELOPING the downs soft rolling crest
Is Alma Mater. Her pearly flint-knapt
Limbs, sandstone-encas'd, demurely drest,
Harmoniously crown that green wind-capt
Most Southern dome of Sussex' chiefest-pride.
Deep filial love her scatter'd progeny—
A guerdon for her guidage—all provide;
An index and a sure hegonomy
Her vitalising spirit doth invite;
On lower slopes the truly carven fields—
All unsuspect—the cricketers' delight—
Earth's loveliness in verdant vesture yields
And, dominating all, La Sainte Chapelle,
In buttress'd beauty, aspires to Heav'n. Fare Well.

THE MEMORIAL.

Their name liveth evermore for they gave their all.

APART—aloof—the little Chantry calls
Insistently, that those who fell to rise
Shall live in glorious memorials
To exemplify the Greatest Sacrifice.
No simple parchment palimpsest of names!
No churchyard mason's mediocrity!
We have a pious care that none defames
The resting ones with what is fulsome, pretty.
Grief's sting dies in beauteous sanctities—
Translucent—joyous—yet ethereal;
Then add strange dignity, for where God is
Death enters not, but Peace celestial—
And, blessing all, a Regnant Christ behold
On high—"A Life to give—a Faith to hold."*

An old *Stucco duro* Italian Figure; Cross 19th century.
See Note page 74.

FROZEN MUSIC.

THE artist who would fain despise the concord
Of sweet sounds is invertebrate. No sovran
Cure, no anodyne avails to give accord,
Nor bond of sympathy—poor soul-tied man !
The perfect noble Architect should recreate
The stately grace of Music's harmonies—
Those pregnant joys which faintly permeate
The very brain and ever adumbrate—
As Euclid's asomptote successfully defies
Each scholar's humble gaze, intense, distraught—
'Ere he can crystallise the underlying thought
Which builds a masterpiece in ultimate.
Then Music, freed from her obscurity
In static form gains perpetuity.*

THE AMULET.

O RED cornelian scarabeus mine
With sparkling facets, as beetles' eyes
Catch glints of light, pray prove an anodyne
To life's laborious toil and ne'er despise
To vivify and lighten my dull mind
Bent on elucidating mysteries
Engrossing thorough thinkers who bind
The older trains of thought by arteries
Unseen to essential modernity
And even trace an incarnation—
This scarab—over six thousand B.C.—
Were it Queen Moo's—great consummation!
Her talismanic poseidonian charm
Then keeps its owner surely from all harm.*

"THE THREE-FOLD STATE."

UTOPIAN effort, pithed with vision
We give our euge, O Rudolph Steiner,
Nor do we this in cheap derision
Seeing how whole-heartedly the finer
Philologisms are skilfully decried.
But why recess "life spiritual"—
In perpetuity depressed—soul-tied—
When men's demands are individual?
Why rank it indign third—in ultimate?
"Life economic" holds the proud position?
And "life politic" that penultimate!
We fear you as our high physician!
Achieve this potent practicality
And see the grave of ideality.

THE PERFECT VIOLIN-BOW.

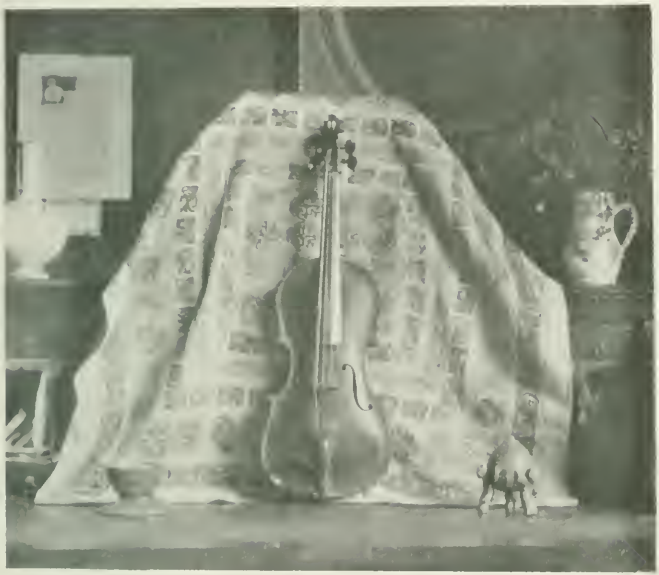
O MAGIC wand of Pernambuco wood
Resilient, yet ever surely strong;
Elastic—but as if you understood
Too great a flexibility were wrong;
Of subtle curves all cunningly devis'd
To hold the player's most impassioned mood
And yet yield gently—but uncompromised—
As when a wooer forcefully intrudes
His ardent vows on her reluctant ear
Yet wins his goal by pressure delicate
Dissolving lovingly the maiden's fears—
For you no music is too intricate.
Without your aid the great Guarnerius
Is mute—a veritable incubus.*

THE GRASSHOPPER.

ENCHANTED insect thron'd in verdant ease
Whose intimations of the ripening years
First prompted that old monarch Cingalese,
Ravana, to treat the motive which inheres
Primordially in the crisp attack
Of your inspirëd song and thus create
The viol-bowed tribe which takes us back
To four thousand B.C. To such a date
Belongs his Ravanastron primitive—
The Glorious Fiddle embryotic—
Embodying the principle imperative
Of friction versus noise chaotic.
When daisy-drunk, O Cicalè, thy voice
Should make this dull prosaic old world rejoice.*

GASPARO BERTOLOTTI.

IF Music be the soul of Love then he
Who wrought the initial King of Viols
Must be a God indeed. With wizardry
Did Stradivari by persistent trials
But perfect forth what Gaspar first created,
Through softening contours—sweet'ning soundholes—
With seasoned timber variegated
And wreathing round the well-nigh perfect scrolls
He rafaelis'd the rugged Brescian mode,
And, in the process feminis'd its joys—
Acclaimed in many a jewell'd palinode—
But give me, still, the Brescian's austere voice.
Death claims you not, your vibrant chord lives on
Wherever Music brings God's benison.*



Violin by Gaspar da Salò, Brescia, about 1570; length 14¼ ins.; varnish, brown. (Author's.) See Note page 75.

THE ASPIRANT.

WITH rhythmical felicity—rare in one
As adolescent as our Eric is—
The wildest notes in fluent cadence run
All personal. The music seems to kiss
The violin endow'd with essential
Joy ecstatic—sure sign of deft designs
With loving labour wrought which critics all
Detect—but none, save artists, see the signs
Of that obsession sacrificial
Imaginative art exacts from those who give,
To vitalise a moment's vision,
Love's life elixir, surely locative.
Then climb with radiant vitality
The golden way to immortality.*

"TWO SKYLARKS."

ECSTATIC songsters, acolytes of heav'n,
Whose grave apparel scarce befits that song—
Ne'er ceasing eversoon, nor held too long—
Which thrills and throbs, lightening our leav'n;
As deft, exact and careful workers knit
The brightest opalescent arabesque
Of colours gay for smock or finer kit
To garb some town Athenè statuesque.
A Slav inspir'd has prob'd the secret veil'd
Of our sweet songster's most exultant mood,
At highest rapture wild—yet all detail'd—
Discov'ring our poor flat ineptitude.
We bow, O Muscovite musician,
Greeting thee as our soul's physician.*

MAURICE RAVEL.

THOSE strangely mordant chords which Ravel loves—
His sevenths—which add emphasis and trench
The curves melodic as his music moves
By clear-cut paths which ever loved by French
Musicians—excepting nebulous
Debussy whose atmospheric night-lights
Illusively benumb—fortuitous—
As th'ignis fatuous—that dupe—invites
Us into mystic bye-ways then departs
With but the faintest adumbration
Of what his nebulosity imparts.
Ne'er turgid nor impressionistic
Ravel's a master-painter realistic.

JEAN SIBELIUS.

SUCCINTLY as Sibelius, with swift
Unerring master-strokes, draughts lucid, bold
And strong his thoughts thematic, born by gift
Of clarity of mind enforced tenfold
By curious directness and that love
Of nature in her variant moods—
Austere or wooing sweetly—riches trove
And dreamt upon in his belovèd woods
Yet neutral tints abound as if he sought
Some mystical affinity indign—
Maybe some racial tendency distraught
Or his re-incarnation condign.
Naithless all's architectural, sure-planned,
Just-balanced, classic and never contraband.

HOLST'S SONGS.

THOSE four fine "Songs with Violin" were played
Without an added instrument
Embroidering the grave habiliment
Of mediæval dress chastely arrayed.
A veritable miracle I heard that day
Hard by the sacred well at Glastonbury—
Near where, perchance, the Holy Grail is laid—
Of sacred places the embodiment.
I felt that old delight reborn arise—
Recovered from antiquity,
When men had faith in the Nativity
And could concordant truths encrystallise
In fervent verse—inviolable—
And, as the sunbeam, pure—unsoilable.

STRATAGEMS.

MY Ladie faire sings nothing—no one plays !
The ivory sleeps and patiently obeys
Eyès blind to Music's mysteries,
Whose lode-star bright and magic vista is
That ideal heav'nly sphere belov'd of seers
Inspir'd ; their vision never veers
From that imperishable Grail which Art
Unveils for her true devotees at heart.
Faint wingèd sounds—whispr'ing thro' th'oriflam
Of converse crisp, of barbèd epigram—
Rise from the ever-vibrant violin—
It might be clay—some soulless kyolin !
Ah ! Chill and void are empty chatterings !
My cruel Ladie plays not—no one sings.

CHOPIN'S ANTIDOTE.

CHORDS recrudescent, as an orchid's scent
And very structure and exotic dress
Repellantly appeal, rise persistent
With luscious and sensuous caress,
Inducing, ever, by their languishment,
A certain sweet hypnotic immarcess,
Redolent of their fev'rish ravishment,
Peculiar to their preciousness.
Designing rhythms, delicate and filigree
As a spider's luminous silk-spun web,
Betrays his mastery in an high degree
As th' inscrutible ocean's flow and ebb.
Let Bach's clear enfilade of crystal thought
Elutriate this core of minds distraught.

THE NIGHT BEFORE.

THE longed-for awesome Summons outthrust night—
I call'd the Saints for guidance on my way—
'Fore dawn we scale the top and rush to fight
Cross barbèd wire in tangled disarray—
Quo vadis? Visions rose of greensward slopes
And that sweet peaceful home where bravest ones,
All undeterred by evanescent hopes,
Sat watching, waiting, working for their sons.
When lo! My friend with eager wistful eyes:—
"No rest this fateful eve—some fifty men
From each great school join hands and harmonise
Old songs—e'en rhythms of great Handel's ken."
Celestial music, which clean minds revere,
Th' Alleluia Chorus, then, brought God's throne near.*

FUJI SAN.

O FUJIYAMA, Mount of purest snow,
Whose symmetry, majestic and supreme,
Causes each maiden in the land Fuyo
To emulate the austere perfect gleam
Of Fuji's dazzling forehead with twin peaks;
Whose misty veil is as wistaria—
Pale violet and white with jadelike streaks
Reflected in the Lake called Biwa—
The mirror for her sacred loveliness—
Symbolic of Nirvana's perfect peace;
Receive the Sun's first roseate caress
And smile auspiciously without surcease;
Then sorrow's hush'd—strife still'd—and all the wide
Brown earth itself seemeth beatified.*

PALACE OF ART.

MASTER-ARBITER.

"I see with pride your compasses, your busts,"
Sweet poetry and brushes, but what would ye?

ARCHITECTURE.

"To my all embracing skill each Art entrusts
The fashioning of a fane with eurythmy,
Commodity and of proportions
Exactly fitted unto laws acoustic;
Then Sculpture, Painting—each their portions
Will give with gladness no less than Music
And even lesser arts will find a place
For meritorious endeavours high,
Nor will pale Envy, of the double face,
Be present—such is the diplomacy.
Then Master-Arbiter, sweet viol and verse
Here, once again, will lead the universe."

THE CENTRE-FORWARD.

I'LL try to limn you, Captain bold, as you
Stand waiting for the whistle—" bully off "—
See you give the adversary all due,
That pristine goal and then my cap I'll doff.
The ball is snowy white but very soon
Your clean, crisp strokes bedim its early lustre
And as you push the sphere—veritable boon
To your next player—see all their backs a'fluster!
The pace is great, but when you thought you spied
A nimble foeman thro' the further side
Away you dash t' assist your centre-half—
At circle's edge I all but wrote your epitaph!
The sporting effort—therein lies your fame
As Captain in the oldest British game.*

Incidents—4th TEST,

OLD TRAFFORD, 1921.

LIKE happy flies which sip the nectar from
The jars of druggèd essence of Mount Hybla,
Enthusiasts in thousands got a bomb
When giant Armstrong tried to tempt a nibbler
Three times successively, provocative
Of northern ire from those who knew the rules,
Then sits him on the greensward, locative—
A veritable bird of prey o'er gallinules.
When coached by cock-sure white-clad referees
He stood his ground and spurned the armistice,
Then bowls twelve balls on end—hence " breeze "—
And showed he little reck'd the rules, I wis !
Said one " Young Tenny, tried to bluff the 'Mues ;"
League-cricket standard, such a ruse.

MIXED VINTAGES.

ASHOVER BELLS.

ASHOVER bells of dulcet tone
Sweetly a'tolling men do call
Soaring above the winds' high moan
" To taste on meats that feed the soule."

The second bell of plaintive note—
A fine ingratiating sound—
Whose warning pulses gravely float—
" Repent, e'er you are in the ground."

Another bell gives piquant warning,
That long's the road, tho' life be brief;
Man may enjoy his eve, his morning,
But cannot here for ever live.*

ENTRANCËD.

SHADOWED onto a gauzy curtain
Methought—wild roses in a vase—
The vision passed.
Not in reality wild roses
But the bright cheeks of my belovëd.

Outlined onto a gauzy curtain
Methought—crystals twain opalescent—
The vision went.
Not in reality twin crystals
But the glorious billowy breasts of my belovëd.

Involute on a gauzy curtain
Methought—two flowers of passion—
The vision stayed.
Behold the two red passion-flowers of my
Belovëd's lips.

O my belovëd come to me,
My garden grows flow'rets red and white,
My treasure-house holds jewels bright,
And in my heart is ecstasy
At our immingled unity.*

FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

THINK you God prefers a miawling prayer
To an exquisite poem of love—
Albeit addressed to a "treasure flower"—
When joy is the perfect gift from above?

Think you you use your powers of thought
Best willed by fertile progenation,
All heedless that your means are nought
To give your young fair education?

Think you all souls damned to eternity
Which fail to hold your little creed?
'Tis those who act without trepidity—
Faithful—harmonious—who live indeed.

LYRIC.

NO ward against that paradise,
When thou dost me beguile,
Nor shield have I against thine eyes,
I wis,
Except love's litanies.

But when thou brok'st our long still calm
With thine all-endearing voice
It was as though some Heavenly balm
Made nature all rejoice
I wis,
And sweetly sing love's psalm.

But when thou kissest I do blaze
With kindled hot desire—
Moments without a just appraise—
And ever dost inspire
I wis,
Love's course throughout our days.

SONG FOR MUSIC.

O MAID of the long-lashed eyelids;
Me, needs you must love—
The curves are like his bow—Cupid's—
The downy brows—soft as a dove—
He traced that fairy coraline mouth
Sweet as a rosebud in the South.
Me, needs you must love.

O maid of the sapphirine eyes;
Me, needs you must love—
The lark in rapturous ecstacies
He filched that tint from the dome above
He brought it down from the rarified air
To give you frankness—all debonnair—
Me, needs you must love.

SONG FOR MUSIC—*Continued.*

O maid of the blackbird's full rich voice ;
Me, needs you must love—
To make me evermore rejoice
That never can I have enough
Of sweeter music than Orpheus
Made by an old sarcophagus.
Me, needs you must love.

Then come to me and I will prove ;
I, who need'st thy love—
Everything imperative
To perfect unity—I'll prove
More constant, sure and true
Than any in Love's retinue.
O, come to me my love.

THE TRAVELLERS' TREE.

HE lay adying in a far country,
A parch'd country—
He thought of his home in a south county
Where all things bloomed luxuriously.

He whisper'd her name all tenderly,
All tenderly—
"My Glwadys, with our flow'r, come, cream-rosy
From the Traveller's tree, bees' sanctuary."

She had sent him a sprig of cream-rosy,
Of cream-rosy—
Eight weeks gone by—and press'd all comëly
With her silver-point, limn'd skilfully.

THE TRAVELLERS' TREE—*Continued.*

They heard his last faint :—" Gladness mine—
Gladness mine—
Heart's blood fails, but souls divine intertwine
Etherealis'd——puis-sant——com-bine."

That very day she pass'd away with flow'rs bank'd—
With flow'rs bank'd—
Beneath her tree—their tree—all sacrosanct
To courtly bees wondering at her " God be thank'd."*

THE LARK.

O BROWN bird singing
If a word could,
Soul-pulsating,
Pourtray your mood,
What would it be?
Empyreal? Free?
Nectar-devised?
No! 'Tis ecstasy.

TOUT PASSE.

TH' apparent friabilitie
Of earthly things *en masse*
Because of their fragilitie
Tout passe, tout casse, tout lasse.

Time's gentle liberalitie
Of touches hidden on th' arras
Achieve too soon mortalitie—
Tout passe, tout casse, tout lasse.

But the greatest loves humanitie—
Despite inherent matter crass—
Can hold with bravest sanitie
*Ne passe, ne casse, ne lasse.**

THE LOVER'S RETURN.

CEASE your grumbling restless bee !
My Lord and Lover comes to me !
Every tree stands list'ningly
For his belovèd step.

Flowers, now, look your brightest !
Lily—spotless—shine your whitest !
Laughing airs breathe your lightest
Lest I grave my epitaph !

Lustrous brown my lover's eyes—
Agate pools in paradise—
Sound my soul and realise
Infinite eternities.*

THE ROSE.

LIKE unto love is yon fair rose,
Around it heav'nly fragrance blows,
Yet tears of dew its leaves enclose,
Like unto love.

'Tis cull'd to flow'r upon the breast,
Tho' sharpest thorns its stem infest—
They must be gather'd—'tis manifest—
Like unto love.

If proud hands the twin buds sever,
They die. Their blossoms quiver
But the thorns are keen as ever,
Like unto love.*

THE ASPENS.

THE ever-whispering aspen-trees,
Conducting their secret minstrelsy,
Alone make melodies
Mysteriously.
When flowers droop, bent low with heat
Too listless far to listen,
Nor watch the golden heads of wheat
Imperiously
Erect, nor ever feel the faintest breeze
The aspens know has risen.

Hot scents abound, yet never do
Those shimmering trees want air—
The elms are statues and the yew
Is sulkily aware
That stagnant heat won't brown
Their green, tho' shiv'ring grasses cease to sigh
And dumb-beasts seek earth-down
Ingenuously
In the umbrage aspens give.

And as I dreamt of the silence of God—
A silence which only the angels hear—
The little feet came pattering near
And paused at the aspens' eisteddfodd,
Then gaily she laughed " Ah ! there you are ! "
It seemed to be the song of a star
To my half-reluctant palinode.

BIRD OF PARADISE.

WHAT everlasting wish can I send my
Blue-Bird who first endued my love with
breath,
Who fired amain incontrovertibly
Love's fuse—the greatest thing in life, past death—
Extasing into flame that vital spark
Which soars to seek the Heav'ns illimitable
Hegomony—that puissant hierarch
Attainèd only through love's crucible?
This fragrant thought from the far orient—
Whence many a beauteous flower divine,
Ambrosial—vital—ambient,
Adorns love's mystery, its anodyne—
" May ev'ry day be as the southern sun, bring wine,
Your years as the undying sàlube pine."

A LITTLE THING.

WARNING.

Corpora amore cadunt—Corda ligata manent.

MEDITATION.

A LITTLE thing—a ring—to bind
Two hearts and build with surety
Ramparts impregnable 'gainst the blind,
The fearsome march which silent Tempè
Steals upon us—predesign'd.

VALE ET VALETE.

Be it sorrow—be it laughter
In both present and hereafter
May your souls, as now, respond
To the hand's undying bond—
Summer, winter, here—beyond
And remain God-benison'd.*

A BIRTHDAY GREETING.

MAY all your years be happy years—
Not sad nor comatose—
May all your tears be joyous tears
Your days as Junè's rose.
May Fortune smile and friends hold fast
And add their salt to life;
Then, where-e'er your lot be cast
The Blue-Bird's car you'll drive.

THE ENGAGEMENT RING.

IF once I dream of you as dead—
Those vibrant pulses lying still'd—
Life's glorious enterprise were vain
Too soon fulfilled.

No, no! your ever-radiant soul
Lives on where happy spirits gain
Eternal comfort and are for ever blest;
Where earthly beauties are intensified
To welcome each new guest.

This gem—September's chrysoprase—
The green of spring and witness to our troth,
'Tis Orpheus list'ning to his lute
Symbolic of love here—beyond:
Belovèd—our eternal bond;
Heaven's gain—earth's loss—involute.

TO AN ENGINEERING MAID.

(With a "Scissors to Grind, O" Card on her Birthday.)

NO need for a micrometer
Nor even a speedometer
To tell you how the years flit on.
May your wishes—all divine—
Prove a lasting anodyne
(Oh ! what dreadful rhymes to hit on)
If you ever think of gauging Time's centifugal line.

And now you're three and twentie
If your cry's—*risorgamente*—
Just apply a close recension
And brouse—*un peu—très lentë*
Think of wine and song in plentie
And then to you a notable ascension
Will come at *tre e vente* with *dolce far niente.*

SEEING HIM OFF.

SHE'D a rose upon her cheek, bewitchin' wi' a dimple
Had Eileen, fair Eileen,
As she ran to see me off—so radiant and simple,
All frolicsome and gay, like a zephyr at the dawn
An' she whisper'd at the door, wi' eyes a' shimmereen
" An' I hope it'll be fine for harvestin', the morn."

But another with her came, also full of fun,
Blythe Doreen, bright Doreen,
A red shawl on 'er shoulders, she capered like a fawn ;
On 'er lips a winnin' smile, eyes glistnin' in the sun,
An' she whisper'd at the door, wi' lids a'quivereen,
" An I hope it'll be fine for harvestin', the morn."

I answered wi' " oo aye," in my shy kind o' way,
Whiles between, whiles between,
For foolish-like but honest, mi' thoughts were o'th hay,
When up comes little Kitty, a singin' of a ditty,
An' she whisper'd at the door, a beamin' like a queen,
" An I hope it'll be fine for harvestin', the morn."

You could a fell'd me wi' a straw—I gives a little cough
And just sez :—" aw—buzz off."*

THE JUMPER KNITTER.

THOUGHT she—'tis but human laziness
Impels the dwellers in these tenements
To grow those aspidistras—more or less—
I'll seize God's blue—His firmament.
From earnings slender, week by week,
She set aside some unclean bits of bronze
Till—scorning lunch—she went to seek
A florist in the market—one Alphonse.
With treasure trove she hurried back
To her grim workshop in the court;
The work-girls knew her rapid knack
But wondered at the work she wrought.
Her colours seemed to leap aright—
Their reds and blues clashed, all ajar—
Her's were indeed a gorgeous sight,
Like Fiamma di Perugia.
Homeward she wandered roseate
Through the pungent alley's labyrinths,
Nor ever feeling nauseate
For dreaming of her hyacinths.

Her tiny refuge seemed immense
" Blue is for Our Lady Fair :
White betokens innocence :
Red is love's sceptre rare
And royal Purple, penitence."
The compost lay in the potter's sherds
And only the tips discoverèd
Where the hyacinths lived as birds
Beaks peep by the mother-bird's head.

Weeks passed and all was well ;
Fair leaves arose green and tall
Enwrapping the longed-for asphodel
Which was to be all magical.
But never a flower with all her care
Shewed to grace her first-floor-back.
Resigned she sighed and, in despair,
She groaned aloud " life is black—
That devilish pipe with its chemical fume
Has withered my flowers, they'll never bloom."

She asked the Head Horticulturist
To pardon her pride, let her think instead
Aspidistra's flowers are amethyst,
Surviving neglect, for by Him they were bred.

INCIDENTAL.

ARISING with lark at dawn—
A dawn of pure alizarine—
And rabbits coursing by the lawn
Where pearls of dew on em'rald green,
Rosytipt and crystalline,
Forbade all trespass—wondrous morn !
'Stead of rolling or of mowing
I went off to churn up carbide—
Larks extasing—cattle lowing—
Turned the poultry all outside,
Such a cackle, such a crowing !
Next I wash'd the fowlhouse down,
Re-arranged the scratching litter,
Whilst a robin, red and brown,
Carol'd through the sparrows' twitter.
The blithesome day from five to one
Whilst Denys labour'd, Denise spun.

Lest you should think that spinning flax
Was all that my sweet sweeting did,
I'd have you know she's not so lax—
An insensate caryatid—
Insouciant or merely vapid—
Whilst Denys digs or wields the axe.
She has no buxom serving wench,
No culinary commandant,
Nor " tweeny " at the washing bench,
Yet nothing ever looks aslant,
Nor'd contretemps her spirits quench.
Nor must you think because a guest
At one fifteen we had to meet—
A worn-out worker needing rest
Who travels down from Cannon Street—
That this disturbs her set routine :—
All things comely—all things clean.

INCIDENTAL—*Continued.*

Off we went towards one fifteen
Aclimbimg Sheepfold's dusty hill
And noted cowslips bow'r'd in green
Along the lane where music's thrill
Comes ever at the silv'ry rill
Which mirrors sky all azurine.
In the ditch—part ebriate—
The quaintest couple came to view,
'Midst Robin-red—finibriate,
And Speedwell's splendid bluest blue,
Incongruous—invertebrate—
Professors—tatt'demalion
Sat Galatea—Pygmalion—
Unkempt in beauty's highest heights!
Discordantly the tramp-man croaks:—
"Lazy-lookin' sorter blokes."*

THE LITTLE ONE.

"BUSY, Daddlyoo?"
"Yes, very, Alethea"
"Then I'll pull out Old Johnny Crow
And ask some questions you'll excuse
'Cause you need'nt hear."

"What's that I wonder?
He is a funny dear!
Yes, I know its that old "guenpin"
Goin' hoppin' along like an'fin,"
Said my Alethea.

"Oh! what a drefful ugly thing—
I hope it wont come here—
Saying 'ask no longer what am I!
My name's the hippopotami'
Spell'd quite clear."

"Here they are in class
Sittin' round quite near
And there's the wise old elephant "....."
(My remark's irrelevant
I fear, I fear).

Yet, this happy blend—
Innocent, sincere—
Of childish ways, great withal
Help'd me design a cathedral!
"I thank you Alethea."*

ENCHANTMENT.

DAY-DREAMER.

"O FAIRIES who live in the serpentine
And irridescent rainbow's line
Fly down, fly down;
For here's the blithest time of June
When nature sings the sweetest tune
And common things seen near divine."

FAIRY.

" 'Tis true we live in those wonderful tints
Where em'rald, rose and gold catch glints
Come up, come up;
See our strange and lustrous colours
Which makes your earthly ones as dull as
Clouds—mere dark, gloomy mezzotints."

DREAMER.

"I cannot leave my beauteous flow'rs
But use your high supernal pow'rs
Glide here, glide here;
I'll shew you deepest blue harebells
And many wondrous ocean shells,
Come sip the dew in cistus-bowers."

FAIRY.

"Our infinitesimal glow-lamps bright
Are overpow'r'd by your daylight
Come then, come then;
The eagle fair will bear you here
Serene and gay—nor harbour fear—
He loves a blue and dizzy height,
But our inviolate rules prevent—
On pain of death—our earth-descent,
We come, we come,
When moonlight hours attend our wings
And we can dance in fairy rings
All debonnair for merriment."

THE PINK PIPE.

IN Manchester there stands a chimney
Of an incredible and nauseous type;
It's passable but when veil'd dimly
By kindly fog screening this tall pink pipe.
My garden-wall of purple-black and greyish
Hand-made bricks has beauty rare;
Its sheen of ivy, myrtle-green and every-dayish
Friendly look assist one to prepare
For common round and daily task sure-handedly,
Whereas the pink brute gives the meal a bitter taste
And makes one feel at enmity, quite candidly.
Ironic, too, its import, for this machine-made monster
When belching forth its turgid cloud of dense black smoke
Thrice daily, produces the very dirt preposter-
-ous, killing the breath of cleanliness baths should evoke

The Baths' Chimney, High Street, Manchester;
from a Water-Colour by the Author.

A PLEA FOR LIGHT AND AIR.

RAZE those ware-rooms antiquated
From nether Deansgate unto Albert Square.
Why must our folk be saturated
With dirt, bad air? A narrow thoroughfare
Has slender commendations, none as rare
As those obtain'd by gracious light and air.
Be wise, at risk of being over-rated,
Plan twin boulevards, all foliated,
And central build an operatic house.
Then may this great commercial hub prepare
The way—forestall those slurs invidious.
The new Laurentian build where studious
Minds already are found congregated
And make new Manchester without compare.
Plant Piccadilly full of flowers fair!
And never dream great *projets* anti-dated.*

THE CRICKET-FIELD.

THE WESTERN CLUB.

HOW many who have learnt to play the game
On this broad smiling neatly-smoothen lawn—
A goodly few, I wis! Some risen to fame;
Some far away a colony adorn—
Who wistfully revisualise light on
The wavy grass which 'broiders bordering fields
Where Heaven's winds do freely blow right on
To drive away the smoke " the workshop " yields?
How many fight anew the fights of old
Remembering the pristine " century,"
Or how some valiant opponent bowled
But smitten was to distant boundary?
Straight all returns—the long forgotten mood
Of joy at sight of your green quietude.

POSTLUDE
&
NOTES.

POSTLUDE.

If critics ask "why?" I would reply:—"Sir, for pleasure; also to avoid the sending of copies in script to those who, no doubt, over-rate their value and to comply with the wishes of those who have urged me to get them printed."

The classical reader and the modern versifier will be repelled alike. The one because of the many long words of Latin derivation and the other because I have not conformed to the admired modern way of printing one word as a line whilst its neighbours contain anything from two to, say, fourteen: as a method of making virile, live verse it's very affectation condemns it. We English, with our long-suffering simplicity, are not as simple as that. "*Credere nil sapiens amat, omnia credere simplex; Scilicet hic aliis credulus, ille sibi*"!

I fail to see, however, why one must be impelled to find little gritty one-syllable Saxon words when others arise naturally—which hit one's mood—but which may be long or even strange to the language. The mere fact that little words make easy work does not appeal to me at all. If it be said that they are the most beautiful, I demur. That is a question of fineness of musical ear.

As the sonnet is admittedly the most difficult form of verse I suggest that it is only those who have essayed a sequence of sonnets in both forms—I mean, the accepted short-word mode and in my freer way—whose criticism may be valuable. The depreciator of this little selection may rest assured that nothing will survive which does not merit a rescue from oblivion.

With regard to the particular form of sonnet I am whole-heartedly in favour of that which Spencer, Shakespeare and others have adopted. It is the oldest of all and came from Sicily in the twelfth century and consists of fourteen lines of ten beats, each line rhyming alternately and the whole being summed-up in a rhymed couplet, called "illegitimate" because it departs from that of Arezzo (c. 1250) or Petrarch or Michel Angelo it is, in reality, the most legitimate because the most primitive. I consider, however, that the Petrarchan form is suited admirably to the Italian language, with its rounded softnesses, but that a higher test is evoked by that concise ending, of the Elizabethan sonnet, which should convey the whole. Moreover, it fits our sturdy northern character as a glove.

POSTLUDE—*Continued.*

TO ANY SONNETEER.

The perfect issued sonnet 'resteth Time—
It is eternal, yet the monument
A moment giveth. Rossetti's rhyme,*
Petrarchan and providing high content,
Redeemed is by its sole "fault" and freed
From the "legitimate" debased form—
A stranger to the late Italian breed—
Approaching what I deem the real norm
Because its couplet, all Shakesperian,
Harks back and back to fairest Sicily—
Although some deem it but Spencerian—
Whence came that round full end in certainty.
Let noble utterance, then, perfect thine aims
Unprejudiced by prior famous names.

*Rossetti's SONNET ON THE SONNET is meant, written for his mother, 1880, it is copyright, but being accessible and well-known I do not give it.

PHILIP ROBSON,
Clarendon Road,
MANCHESTER—1921.

NOTES.

P. 1. Designed for treble voices and muted strings, *pianissimo* at the reception of the Holy Eucharist and set to music by F. Kessler, 1910, and published by the Opus Music Co. (Organ Score).

P. 2. From St. Paulinus de Nola :—
" Ferte Deo, pueri laudem, pia solvite vota, Spargite flore solum, prætexite limina sertis ; Purpureum ver spiret hyems, sit floreus annus Ante diem, sancto cedat natura diei." The title is mine.

P. 3. With a design for a St. Michael Banner for Chalice Well, Glastonbury.

P. 4. Silver candlesticks of continental workmanship—possibly Nüremberg. Marked T.D. ? Thomas Danner, master in 1621.

P. 5. On St. Sophia, Constantinople. The quotation is from Constantine.

P. 6. To a bust in statuary marble, by Fontana, exhibited in the Royal Academy, in 187—. Works by this artist will be found in the Liverpool Art Gallery.

P. 7. This unique watch was designed by the famous Pre-Raphaelite for the late Edward Robert Robson, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A., F.S.I., and, from him, it has descended to the author.

P. 9, 10, 11 The underlying ideas of these three sonnets are (1) Seek reticence, (2) Mere repetition and axiality are not composition in the best sense (3) There is no originality in Architecture but is obtained by new combinations of old ideas. You *can* have ugly originality but not in Architecture (nor in any other Fine Art) for then it becomes mere building.

P. 16. Descriptive of a proposed War-Memorial, consisting of oak-work to the Anson Chapel, St. Chrysostom's Church, Victoria Park, Manchester. It was intended that a frieze of very bright Limosges enamels—commemorative of the dead—should form part of the scheme—with a statue of Christ, regnant, in the act of blessing. The illustration is from an old Italian Crucifix, which is used at Ringley Church, Manchester, on a War-Memorial. The author has altered it slightly and has had a few casts made from it, one of which he gave to St. Chrysostom's Church. The quotation is from R. L. S.

P. 17. An attempt to show the unity of the Fine Arts, notably the close link between Architecture and Music. The title is from Schelling.

P. 18. On a cut cornelian beetle from the Hilton collection and taken from a tomb about 6,000 B.C., Egyptian.

P. 20. To my bow, by Eugène Sartory, of Paris, of superb workmanship. Exhibited at the Franco-British Exhibition, 1908. The first sonnet on the bow.

P. 21. The frictional noise which a grasshopper makes scratching its wing is supposed to be the idea from which bowed instruments sprang.

P. 22. Gasparo Bertolotti—known as "Gaspar da Salò" from his birthplace, Salo, on the Lago di Garda, Brescia, Italy—the inventor of the violin about 1560. He was born in 1542. The particular example to which this sonnet is written is the finest known specimen extant and is called "The Cannon" from its peculiarly powerful tone. It is 14¼ inches long and has brown varnish. The embroidery on which it is is old work from Greek Islands (with modern insertion). It was made up at Smyrna, but is all of the same date approximately.

P. 23. At Eric Fogg's concert, Manchester, 1921.

P. 24. On the musical-composition "Two Skylarks," for pianoforte, by T. Leschetizky.

P. 30. Of those 50 who went over the top (Somme), only 15 returned.

P. 31. Fujiyama—the sacred mountain of Japan. Fuyo= lotus. Fuji batai—the Fuji forehead, considered the perfect shape of *coiffure* in Japan.
Bina—the Lake of the Lute, from its shape.
Nirvana's perfect peace—typified by the 8 petalled lotus and by the 8 sides of Fuji.

P. 33. The three points peculiar to Hockey—" bully off ; " " circle " and " push " stroke. The circle has to be reached before a goal can be hit and the man who invented this made the game, but he remains unknown. The " push " stroke emanated from the Blackheath Club in the late nineties. As far as I know the first sonnet on hockey.

P 34. As this cricket-match between Australia and England will, no doubt, be regarded as one of the most remarkable ever played, being an eye-witness, I chronicle the facts. No play being possible on the first day owing to rain, this " three-day " fixture became automatically, under Rule 55, a " two-day " match. Being in a leading position, Tennyson, the English captain, declared the innings closed at 5-50 leaving the Australians 30 minutes to bat in a none-too-good light. This contravened Rule 54, which stipulates that no declaration may be made later than one hundred minutes before " time " in a *two-day* match on the first day. Armstrong kept his men in the field after conference with the umpires but Fender and Tyldesley (E.) went into the pavilion. Later the Australians followed. The big roller was produced, but was stopped short of the wicket. After wasting twenty minutes Armstrong led his team out again amidst much boo-ing from a certain section of the crowd opposite the pavilion. Three times he tried to bowl and as he ran each time the crowd yelled and hooted. He then sat on the grass and it was not until a representative from the pavilion

went round the ground explaining Tennyson's error—and Tennyson himself with an umpire had crossed over to explain the incident to the main discontents—was Armstrong able to resume—Tennyson as he returned patting Armstrong on the back, evidently apologising for such unseemly behaviour. Now, as Armstrong had previously bowled the last over, he broke Rule 14 by going on again !

I was in the crowd and various angry exclamations were made and my couplet is intended to show how the insidious influence of the vile " win-tie-or-wrangle " idea is spoiling cricket as it has spoilt association football.

How such a declaration came to be made is incomprehensible. Clearly our captain would be in close consultation with Fry, Warner, Spooner and other famous cricketers who were in the pavilion at the time—some being the actual makers of the Rule they broke !

My impression is that the crowd (some 30,000) was annoyed because a local favourite, Tyldesley, who was playing delightful sparkling cricket, was well-set when the innings was closed prematurely. It was suggested, also, that it was a dodge of the Australians to upset the batsmen by going for refreshments. As a crowd I do not give them credit for observing Armstrong's 12 balls in succession, at any rate round me there was no comment on this except my own. Even the umpires were at fault. A drawn game, of course, became almost inevitable.

P. 36. Ashover, Derbyshire. This musical peal has quaint couplets to each bell somewhat Elizabethan in flavour.

P. 37. The idea of the first part is from a translation of a street song of Baluchistan, in *Coloured Stars*, (Blackwell, Oxford) by E. Powys Mathers.

P. 42. The Traveller's Tree in a garden near East Grinstead. It has a pungent scented flower which the bees love. The only (supposed) other example in England is in Kew Gardens.

P. 45. An old French proverb completed.

P. 46. The lover expected "from the front."

P. 47. Based on a poem by Luis Vaz de Camoens, Portuguese poet, 1524-80. He wrote the first epic in a modern tongue—*Os Lusiadas* (The Lusiads) in ottava rima and it is his most famous work. Lord Strangford's version was set to music by Davy and arranged as a glee by V. Novello.

P. 51. With a wedding gift.

P. 55. Overheard at a railway-carriage door. Intended as an encore (recitation) in dialect. In Lancashire, for instance, "buzz" would be "booz."

P. 59. From life.

P. 62. For Alethea Robson.

P. 67. A suggestion for making two fine *foci*—or open spaces in Manchester. Thus leaving the "Piccadilly site" open and improving Albert Square by grouping the public buildings down to Deansgate (opposite the Ryland's Library) and, on each side, planning wide boulevards with arcaded walks, north and south, where would come, eventually, the best shops. At the bottom, in Deansgate, the Library; in the centre the Opera House; and at the top the Art Gallery.

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